

accuses Grouchy, according to the relation by Gourgaud, of being the cause of the delay in pursuing the Prussians. "Had Grouchy been at Wavre," says Napoleon, "on the 17th, and in communication with my right, Blücher would not have dared to detach any portion against me on the 18th, or if he had, I would have destroyed it." From this charge the Marshal triumphantly defended himself. He states that he endeavored to confer with the Emperor on the night of the 16th, when the Prussians commenced their retreat, but that he could not find him until he returned from Fleurus, and that in reply to his request for re-enforcements of infantry, in order that he might be able to follow Blücher, he could obtain no other answer than that he would receive orders on the following day. The Marshal went again to headquarters on the morning of the 17th, being impressed with the great importance of pursuing the Prussians closely, but was obliged to follow Bonaparte to the field of battle of the preceding day before he could receive his commands. "No orders were given to Grouchy till near noon, when Napoleon suddenly resolved to send him with an army of 82,000 men, not upon Wavre, for it was not known by him what direction the Prussians had taken, but with instructions to pursue Blücher wherever he might have retreated. Grouchy also asserts that the troops of Gérard and Vandamme, which formed a portion of his army, were *not* ready to march until three o'clock. The first orders given to the Marshal for the pursuit, according to his

gave the order." It would be impertinent to say much where so many great authorities have spoken, but the reader must remember that Grouchy had *not* foreseen the possibility of part of the Prussian army joining Wellington. At 10 P.M. on the 17th June, the day after Ligny, he wrote to Napoleon from Gembloux, after saying that the Prussians seemed to have divided, "On pent dit qu'une portion va rejoindre Wellington." (Auvergne's *Waterloo*, p. 231) — "It may perhaps be inferred that one part in going to join Wellington." (*Dorsey Gardner*, p. 148). It is quite true that Grouchy pleaded his orders from Napoleon, but it has often enough been remarked that Desaix might have easily pleaded his orders as good reason for not having any part in the day of Marengo. Desaix halted when he believed that he had received wrong orders, and was on the march to join Napoleon when he met the *aide de camp* sent to recall him. The precious moments thus won enabled him to come up in time to decide the battle, and he died knowing that he had brought victory to the army, instead of living to give ingenious reasons for being absent. Grant all that Grouchy and his advocate urge, it is hard to believe that Desaix would not have made his force tell on the 18th of June*